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	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	NSAE-00	OIC-02	PRS-00
	P-00	SP-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01
	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/007W		

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0026
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 003062

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL. 10/15/11

TAGS: [PGOV PHUM ZI](#)

SUBJECT: TSVANGIRAI EMERGES UNSCATHED FROM ATTACK ON HIS VEHICLE;
MDC SUSPENDS FOUR MPS

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF MATT HARRINGTON. REASONS:
1.5 (B) AND (D).

REF: HARARE 2239

SUMMARY

1. (C) MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) PRESIDENT MORGAN
TSVANGIRAI ESCAPED INJURY ON OCTOBER 12 AFTER HIS CONVOY WAS

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ATTACKED BY STONE-THROWING ZANU-PF SUPPORTERS. TWO WINDOWS IN HIS
VEHICLE WERE SHATTERED AND THE VEHICLE'S BODY WAS DAMAGED. POLICE
WERE UNHELPFUL AND FAILED TO ARREST OR CHARGE ANY OF THE
PERPETRATORS. THE ZANU-PF SUPPORTERS APPEARED TO HAVE PRIOR
KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONVOY'S ROUTE AND TIMING. IN AN UNRELATED
DEVELOPMENT, FOUR MDC MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WERE ON OCTOBER 13
TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED FROM THE PARTY'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE PENDING AN INVESTIGATION INTO THEIR ROLE IN FACTIONAL
DISPUTES SIMMERING FOR ALMOST A MONTH. END SUMMARY.

ATTACK ON TSVANGIRAI

2. (C) ON OCTOBER 12, THE VEHICLE IN WHICH MOVEMENT FOR
DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) LEADER MORGAN TSVANGIRAI WAS RIDING WAS
ATTACKED BY A STONE-THROWING MOB. MDC SECRETARY-GENERAL WELSHMAN
NCUBE, TOLD US THAT TSVANGIRAI HAD BEEN ON HIS WAY TO ADDRESS
PARTY OFFICIALS IN SANYATI, SEVERAL HUNDRED KILOMETERS WEST OF
HARARE, WHEN APPROXIMATELY SEVENTY YOUTHS EMERGED FROM THE BUSHES
AND BLOCKED THE ROAD. THEY THREW STONES AND STICKS, SHATTERING
TWO WINDOWS IN TSVANGIRAI'S VEHICLE, INCLUDING THE ONE IN THE REAR
NEXT TO THE SEAT IN WHICH THE OPPOSITION LEADER WAS SITTING. TWO
STONES LANDED IN THE BACKSEAT BESIDE TSVANGIRAI. ACCORDING TO

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NCUBE, THE MOB DISPERSED AFTER A BODYGUARD IN THE SECOND CAR FIRED
A PISTOL IN THE AIR.

3. (C) THE CONVOY SPED TO THE NEAREST POLICE STATION, IN KADOMA,
TO REPORT THE INCIDENT. NCUBE TOLD US THAT THE POLICE APPEARED
COMPLETELY INDIFFERENT AND ONLY SEEMED INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT
WHO HAD DISCHARGED THE PISTOL. NONE OF THE MDC REPRESENTATIVES
HAD MENTIONED THAT A SHOT HAD BEEN FIRED, AND THUS THEY ASSUMED
THAT THE POLICE HAD WITNESSED WHAT HAD TAKEN PLACE. NONE OF THE
PERPETRATORS HAS BEEN DETAINED OR CHARGED.

4. (C) FORTUNATELY, NEITHER TSVANGIRAI NOR ANYONE ACCOMPANYING
HIM WAS HURT. WHEN POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF ASKED WHETHER THE MDC
CONSIDERED THIS AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT, TSVANGIRAI'S SPECIAL
ADVISOR GANDI MUDZINGWA REFUSED TO RULE IT OUT AS A POSSIBILITY.
"ANYTIME YOU SEND 75 PEOPLE TO THROW STONES THROUGH A CAR WINDOW,
YOU CANNOT GUARANTEE WHAT THE RESULT WILL BE," MUDZINGWA SAID.
"FATALITIES COULD OCCUR." HE POINTED OUT THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO
CONTROL A STONE-THROWING MOB ONCE IT IS UNLEASHED.

COMMENT

15. (C) THE OCTOBER 12 INCIDENT IS THE SECOND ATTACK ON A
TSVANGIRAI CONVOY IN LESS THAN THREE MONTHS -- THE FIRST OCCURRED

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JULY 22 IN BINDURA (REFTEL). THE TACTICS USED IN BOTH INCIDENTS
WERE VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL, WITH AMBUSHES CARRIED OUT IN ISOLATED
LOCATIONS ALONG RURAL STRETCHES OF ROAD, WHILE TSVANGIRAI WAS
TRAVELLING TO PUBLICLY ADVERTISED MEETINGS. THE CIRCUMSTANCES
SUGGEST SOME DEGREE OF PLANNING BY THE ASSAILANTS. WHILE THIS
APPEARED TO BE CONTINUED INTIMIDATION, THE OCTOBER 12 ATTACK
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CLEARLY COULD HAVE KILLED TSVANGIRAI, AN OUTCOME WHICH WOULD HAVE
SPARKED SERIOUS UNREST. AT A MINIMUM, BOTH ATTACKS ARE CONSISTENT
WITH THE PATTERN DURING THE PAST YEAR-AND-A-HALF OF GOVERNMENT-
SANCTIONED VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION AIMED AT THE MDC LEADERSHIP
AND PARTY SUPPORTERS. AFFORDING SOME DEGREE OF DEFENSIVE
PROTECTION TO TSVANGIRAI AS HE TRAVELS ABOUT THE COUNTRY IS HIGHLY
DESIRABLE.

MDC OFFICIALS SUSPENDED

16. (U) MEANWHILE, IN AN UNRELATED DEVELOPMENT, FOUR MDC MEMBERS
OF PARLIAMENT WERE ON OCTOBER 13 SUSPENDED FROM THE PARTY'S
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PENDING AN INVESTIGATION INTO THEIR
ROLE IN FACTIONAL DISPUTES SIMMERING FOR ALMOST A MONTH. THE
SUSPENDED MPS INCLUDE LEARNMORE JONGWE, PARTY SPOKESMAN; JOB
SIKHALA, SECRETARY FOR SECURITY; TAPIWA MASHAKADA, THE SHADOW
MINISTER OF FINANCE; AND TAFADZWA MUSEKIWA. WELSHMAN NCUBE TOLD
JOURNALISTS THAT THE MDC'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE HAD DECIDED TO
TEMPORARILY SUSPEND THE FOUR, ALONG WITH THE PARTY'S PROVINCIAL
CHAIRMAN IN THE TOWN OF CHITUNGWIZA -- ALEX MUSUNDIRE -- UNTIL A
SPECIAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY HAD CONCLUDED ITS WORK. THE
BICKERING BETWEEN THE TWO CAMPS IN THIS GROUP, ONE LED BY SIKHALA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 HARARE 003062

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AND THE OTHER BY MASHAKADA, HAS SPILLED VERY MUCH INTO THE PUBLIC
DOMAIN. THEIR SUPPORTERS DISRUPTED THE SEPTEMBER 16 ELECTION OF A
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NEW PARTY EXECUTIVE FOR HARARE PROVINCE, FORCING A POSTPONEMENT OF
THE VOTE, AND CLASHED WITH EACH OTHER IN THE HARARE HIGH-DENSITY
SUBURB OF ST. MARY'S. IN ADDITION, SIKHALA LEAKED TO THE PRESS A
LETTER HE WROTE TO TSVANGIRAI DEMANDING MASHAKADA'S EXPULSION FROM
THE PARTY.

17. (C) WELSHMAN NCUBE TOLD US ON OCTOBER 15 THAT THE MDC'S
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE WAS NOT HAPPY THAT THE FOUR MPS HAD CHOSEN TO
AIR THEIR GRIEVANCES IN PUBLIC WITHOUT SEEKING SOME SORT OF
RESOLUTION WITHIN THE PARTY. NCUBE CONFIDED HIS SUSPICION THAT
THESE INCIDENTS ARE PARTLY THE RESULT OF AN ENERGETIC OPERATION BY
THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION (CIO) TO DESTABILIZE THE
OPPOSITION PARTY FROM WITHIN. THE MDC LEADERSHIP, HE CONTINUED,
SUSPECTS THAT ONE OF THE FOUR SUSPENDED OFFICIALS IS A KEY
OPERATIVE IN THIS CIO CAMPAIGN. GANDI MUDZINGWA TOLD US THAT HE
DOUBTED THAT THIS SITUATION WOULD INFLICT LASTING DAMAGE ON THE
MDC, SO LONG AS THE PARTY ACTED DECISIVELY AGAINST THOSE INVOLVED.

COMMENT

18. (C) NCUBE'S CONCERN ABOUT CIO ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY THE MDC FROM WITHIN IS WELL-FOUNDED, AS THE INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION HAS PREVIOUSLY -- AND SUCCESSFULLY -- PURSUED THIS APPROACH WITH OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES. THE CIO THEORY, HOWEVER, EXPLAINS ONLY PART OF THE CURRENT SITUATION. SIKHALA AND MASHAKADA ARE ALSO YOUNG, AMBITIOUS POLITICIANS ATTEMPTING TO SETTLE PERSONAL SCORES AS THEY JOCKEY AGAINST ONE ANOTHER FOR ADDITIONAL INFLUENCE WITHIN THE PARTY.

19. (C) ALTHOUGH THE SIKHALA-MASHAKADA DISPUTE IS FAR FROM A FATAL
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BLOW TO THE MDC, IT IS AN IMPORTANT TEST OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP'S CAPACITY TO RESOLVE INTERNAL CONFLICTS. THERE ARE MEMBERS OF THE MDC WHO HAVE NOT APPRECIATED THE FACT THAT A PARTY CAN BE DEMOCRATIC BUT STILL INSIST THAT MEMBERS BE DISCIPLINED AND RESPECT PARTY POLICIES AND PROTOCOL. THE MDC LEADERSHIP HAS, UNTIL NOW, BEEN RELUCTANT TO MOVE AGAINST MEMBERS WHO FLOUTED IMPORTANT PARTY POSITIONS, OUT OF FEAR THAT IT WOULD BE PORTRAYED AS INTOLERANT OR ANTI-DEMOCRATIC. THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY PROVIDES A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REIN IN WAYWARD MEMBERS AND TO SEND A STRONG MESSAGE ABOUT HOW THE PARTY WILL HANDLE SIMILAR PROBLEMS IN THE FUTURE. IN THE MEANTIME, THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED MEDIA HAVE HAD A FIELD DAY PORTRAYING THE MDC AS A PARTY IN CRISIS.

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